

Lesson 4

Obedience vs Knowledge



Previous Lessons Recap

History has shown us that Jesus' commandments to His disciples were changed by the church and how other churches tried to reform the church back to the book of Acts.

We learned that we are a royal priesthood, a holy nation who have been made righteous by the death and resurrection of Jesus and that He has given us the ability and authority to do all that He commanded us to do. What we do and cannot do is not determined by a religious system. We do what Jesus says we should do because we choose Jesus, not religion.

The book of Acts shows us what the Holy Spirit can do through us if we allow Him. Our lives can also look like the book of Acts.

1 How much knowledge do you need?

We are going to look at three things that influence a believer's life.

Fear

Obedience

Knowledge

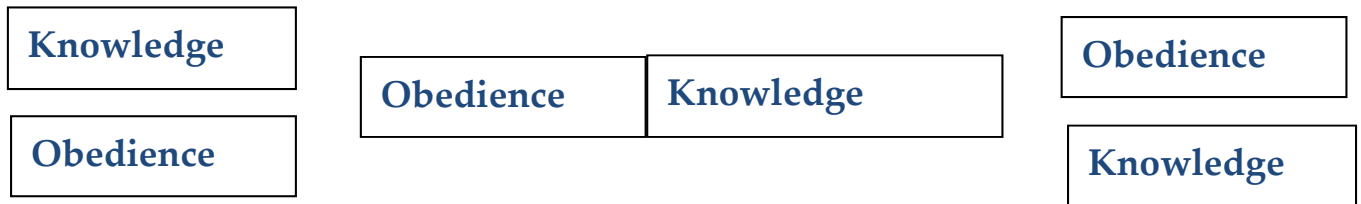
When Martin Luther stood up with his 99 thesis, he focused mostly on the teaching the church provided and it remains to be the most important aspect of any Sunday service. This is the same foundation that churches are built on today. If you ask any believer how the service on Sunday was, they will likely talk about what was taught. Was it a good message or not? Teaching has become the most important thing.

Teaching however, is not the most important thing. Especially not the way the average church is doing it today.

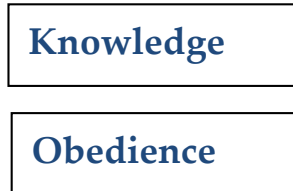
The example Jesus gave looks very different from what we see today. When Jesus started recruiting the disciples, he said come follow me and let me show and train you. Jesus did not stand behind a pulpit sharing stories. He disciplined the fisherman by being a live example.

Today we think that if we get more teaching, we will become more like Jesus. Teaching alone will not achieve this. Teaching leaves you only with a lot of head knowledge. We actually need more obedience.

Which of these three arrangements best represents how it is in our lives? Do we have more knowledge or more obedience?



Most of the believers today live lives where they have obtained a lot of head knowledge but have very little obedience.



Historically, churches in persecuted countries do not have the same amount of knowledge that churches in the western world have. Bibles are not allowed. People meet in secret and often pay with their lives when they do.

Without all this knowledge, the persecuted churches are growing faster than where knowledge is so highly regarded. . It is currently estimated that the USA has the most Christians per capita, but China will soon overtake the USA in numbers. Most of this growth is directly due to the growth of the underground church movements.

2 Our Obedience

Our obedience to the word of God is very much influenced by the way we do church today. People believe that it's all about knowledge and teaching. If you want to be a good pastor, you have to provide the best teaching and if you are really good at it, you will be paid big money to travel and teach all over the world.

It is one thing to know about something. It's another, to actually do it.

If we want lives changed for the better, more knowledge doesn't do it. We need to learn how to do the things we read about in the Bible.

In scriptures like Matt 10:8, it's easier for people to look at this religiously and write a theology about it, than to go and do it. If we simply obey what is written, we will start to see that the word is alive and life changing.

Matthew 10:8 heal the sick, raise the dead, cleanse lepers, cast out demons.

Here is an analogy of what theology does with scripture.

Let's say your children have messy rooms. You call them over and tell them to go clean their rooms. They go into their rooms and several minutes later, they come out and say, "hey daddy, we have memorized what you have told us. We memorized what you said: "Please go and clean your rooms, we have guests coming over soon. Not only that, daddy, but we learned how to say what you told us to do, in three other languages as well".

So you ask them, "Ok but have you cleaned your rooms?" "No daddy but we did memorize it". So you tell them again, "go clean your rooms". Several minutes later they come back to you and say, "Hey daddy, we have a paper here with 10 different ways on how to clean our rooms".

Yet the rooms are still not clean. They were told to clean the rooms, not to memorize or study what was said but to go clean their rooms.

Today we do the same with His word and things He asks us to do. Sometimes we do even worse. We don't just memorize the words, but come up with 10 excuses why we don't do the things He asks us to do!

3 The Two Mirrors

Discussion: Have you ever experienced Jesus, or have you ever had a strong spiritual experience? How long ago did this happen and how clearly can you remember it?

2 Corinthians 3:18 and we all, with unveiled face, beholding the glory of the Lord, are being transformed into the same image from one degree of glory to another. For this comes from the Lord who is the Spirit.

This is a reference to Moses and the Israelites. It's like someone looking into a mirror and seeing the glory of God and becoming transformed into the image they see.

In James 1:22-24 but be doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving yourselves. For if anyone is a hearer of the word and not a doer, he is like a man who looks intently at his natural face in a mirror. For he looks at himself and goes away and at once forgets what he was like. But the one who looks into the perfect law, the law of liberty, and perseveres, being no hearer who forgets but a doer who acts, he will be blessed in his doing.

The first man is looking into a mirror and how he is being transformed into the image he sees. Then we see a man looking into a mirror, but the moment he turns away from the mirror, he forgets what he saw and there is no transformation.

So what is this man seeing, what is the image? It is the word of God, the Bible. So the one man looks into the word and it transforms him. The other one does the same, but there is no transformation. When people ask what was preached last Sunday we have to think hard to remember what it was about.

We easily forget the things we hear. We deceive ourselves by thinking that if we only hear the word, our lives will be changed. James wrote it clearly, don't be hearers of the word only, but be doers of the word.

You are deceiving yourself if you think that receiving a lot of knowledge is going to change your life. How many people do you know who have been in church for many years but never preached the gospel, healed the sick, cast out demons etc. People attend bible schools and can quote the Bible from the front to the back but cannot witness Jesus to unbelievers. Is this what Jesus did?

Matthew 28:19-20 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

When we see the word "teaching", we immediately think of someone standing at a pulpit teaching about the word. This is not what we see Jesus doing with the disciples nor did the disciples do this with new believers. The right translation would be: showing them how to do it.

4 Fishers of Men

Matt 4: 18-20 While walking by the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter) and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea, for they were fishermen. And he said to them, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

Luke 6:40 A disciple is not above his teacher, but everyone when he is fully trained will be like his teacher.

In these scriptures, Jesus calls the first disciples and tells them to leave everything behind and follow Him. They would learn as He teaches and shows them. It is similar to a master teaching the apprentice and to have

the apprentice one day, be and act just like the master. "See what I do, then do the same" "follow my example" There is a difference between being a student and being an apprentice.

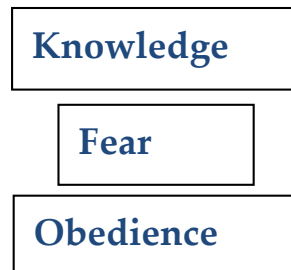
We are also called to be an apprentice of Jesus', to observe what He did and do the same. Because we don't see this being done today, we have churches full of fearful people. If you have a lot of knowledge but no one showing you how, you will fear doing the things Jesus did.

It is like someone learning to be an electrician. They go to college and study many books on how to be an electrician. After a few years of studying the books, they get a certificate to be an electrician. He gets a call to go and fix an oven and sees it is a very old oven. Now he is filled with fear because he doesn't really know what to do. He will go away filled with fear.

In the real world, the apprentice would study first and then go out with a master electrician. The master will show him once how to fix the old oven. The next time they get an old oven to fix, the apprentice will do the work knowing there is someone beside him who knows how to do it. Then the next time the apprentice would be able to fix it without fear.

This is discipleship.

For some reason, we don't do this in church. How many people have taught you how to baptize another person in the Holy Spirit or to prophecy or to heal the sick?



In Luke 10, Jesus sent the disciples out into the nearby towns to go and heal the sick etc. This was easy for them to obey because they had seen Jesus do these things daily.

5 Step out in Faith

Jesus did not give us the great commission to memorize or come up with 10 ways to approach it. He gave us the word, to become the word and live an abundant life in Christ Jesus. The abundance flows out of obedience when we do what we read.

Where is your obedience?

There is only one way to overcome fear. Find someone to learn from. If you cannot find anyone, then stand up in faith and just do it.

Luke 12: 48 Everyone to whom much was given, of him much will be required, and from him to whom they entrusted much, they will demand the more

God is not going to judge us based on our knowledge, but on our obedience to His word.